

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15

ACDA-19 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 OMB-01 IO-14 SAM-01 DRC-01

/138 W

----- 090200

R 101617Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6804

USMISSION NATO

INFO DIA WASHDC

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

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AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

S E C R E T ROME 12412

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, MARR, NATO, GR, IT, CY

SUBJECT: ITALIAN THOUGHTS ON NATO RESPONSE TO KARAMANLIS' LETTER

1 DCM SAW MFA NATO OFFICE CHIEF DA RIN FOR GENERAL REVEIW OF
FOREIGN POLICY SCENE AS ITALIANS EMERGE FROM SUMMER VACATION
PERIOD. HIGHLIGHT OF CONVERSATION WAS DISCUSSION OF PROBLEMS AND
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OPTIONS FLOWING FROM KARAMANLIS' LETTER TO NATO PRIME MINISTERS

ON GREEK INTENTIONS REGARDING NATO.

2. DA RIN INDICATES THAT THE MFA BELIEVES THE LETTER WAS ALL TOO CLEAR AND THAT IT REPRESENTED AN IRREVERSIBLE DECISION TO WITHDRAW FROM NATO'S INTEGRATED MILITARY SYSTEM. ONLY ITEM OPEN TO NEGOTIATION BETWEEN GREECE AND NATO SEEMS TO BE QUESTION OF TIMING.

3. ITALIAN PERM REP AT NATO HAS BEEN REPORTING ACCURATELY AND FULLY, AS DA RIN CLEARLY WAS AWARE OF US PREFERENCE TO KEEP GREECE IN DEMANDEUR POSITION AND TO NOT FORCE PACE OF DEVELOPMENTS WITH POSSIBLY GRAVE IMPLICATIONS. REATIONALE FOR US POSITON WAS REITERATED.

4. DA RIN RESPONDED THAT IN GOI'S VIEW TIME, UNFORTUNATELY, DID NOT APPEAR TO BE ON THE ALLIES' SIDE. ONLY EVENT THAT COULD HELP WOULD BE ASTISFACTORY SETTLEMENT IN CYPRUS REQUIRING SIGNIFICANT TURKISH FLEXIBILITY, WHICH GOI DOES NOT ANTICIPATE.

5. REGARDING KARAMANLIS' LETTER, MFA FEARS THAT A DELAYED OR NON RESPONSE WOULD BE MISINTERPRETED IN ATHENS AS SIGNIFYING THAT NATO WAS WRITING OFF GREECE. MFA BELIEVES LETTER SHOULD BE ANSWERED SOON AND THAT DPC AS 13 (OR 14, IF FRANCE SHOULD CHOOSE TO PARTICIPATE) WOULD BE PROPER BODY TO QUOTE HARMONIZE END QUOTE RESPONSES WHICH EACH GOVERNMENT WOULD THEN TAILOR TO PROTECT SPECIFIC BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH GREECE. DA RIN REPORTED THAT ITALY'S PERM REP HAD BEEN AUTHORIZED TO SUGGEST AT SEPT 19 PERM REPS LUNCHEON FOUT POINTS WHICH REPLIES SHOULD ADDRESS: 1) ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT; 2) EXPRESSION OF REGRET WHILE UNDERLINING GRAVITY OF DECISION; 3) EXPRESSION OF HOPE THAT GREEKS WILL BE ABLE TO RECONSIDER DECISION; AND 4) NOTE ALLIED WILLINGNESS TO EMBARK ON NEGOTIATIONS RE IMPLEMENTATION.

6. MFA AND IMOD FEEL THAT SOUTHER FLANK SECURITY GAPS PRESENTLY EXIST OF SERIOUS DIMENSIONS, ESPECIALLY IN INTELLIGENCE AND SURVEILLANCE ACTIVITIES. THESE NEED TO BE COVERED SOON. THEY BELIEVE THE NATO DPC (AS EITHER 13 OR 14 WITH FRANCE) SHOULD ALSO BEGIN TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS ON THESE ISSUES, WITH GOAL OF RPROVIDING SACEUR WITH CLEAR INSTRUCTIONS FOR OPENING MILITARY-TO-MILITARY DISCUSSIONS OF TECHNICAL PROBLEMS CAUSED BY GREEK

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WITHDRAWAL. IN SAME VEIN, ITALIANS BELIEVE THAT ALLIES SHOULD OPEN DISCUSSION WITH GREEK OFFICERS ASSIGNED TO NATO BEFORE THEY RECEIVE ORDERS TO GO HOME, IN BELIEF THAT THEY ARE A PRO-NATO ASSET THAT MUST BE UTILIZED. COMMENT: DA RIN RECENTLY VISITED CINCSOUTH AND INDICATED THAT GOI VIEWS WERE INFLUENCED BY ATTITUDE HE FOUND IN NAPLES; I.E., DO SOMETHING BEFORE THE GREEK OFFICERS ARE REMOVED FROM NATO COMMANDS. THE ITALIANS BELIEVE THAT IF GREEKS ARE CALLED HOME THE GOG WILL HAVE TAKEN

AN IRREVERSIBLE STEP AND THE ALLIANCE WILL HAVE LOST MOST
SYMPATHETIC GREEK INTERLOCUTORS.

7. DCM QUERIED DA RIN AS TO HOW THE DISCUSSIONS COULD BE KEPT
AT THE TECHNICAL LEVEL WHILE AT SAME TIME ALLIES RECOGNIZE AND
PROMOTE CIVILIAN AUTHORITY OF KARAMANLIS GOVERNMENT OVER GREEK
MILITARY FORCES. WOULD NOT THESE TECHNICAL TALKS BE RAISED VERY
QUICKLY TO POLITICAL LEVEL AND FORCE GREEKS TO BEGIN FINAL ROUND OF
BINDING ACTS. AT THIS POINT DA RIN RESTATED GOI VIEW THAT
KARAMANLIS HAS MADE A FINAL BINDING DECISION RE WITHDRAWAL
FROM NATO AS PRICE HE HAD TO PAY TO SALVAGE OPPOSITION CONSENT
TO OTHER POLITICAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC LINKS WITH THE WEST.
DA RIN CONCLUDED TAT, OF COURSE, SHOULD ALLIED CONSENSUS
DEVELOP AROUND US PLAN TO DEFER ACTION, ITALY WOULD GO ALONG.VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WITHDRAWAL OF MEMBERSHIP, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, NEGOTIATIONS, MILITARY POLICIES, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 SEP 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974ROME12412
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740252-0109
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740959/aaaabyocr.tel
Line Count: 129
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03 APR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <03 APR 2002 by collinp0>; APPROVED <02 JUL 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ITALIAN THOUGHTS ON NATO RESPONSE TO KARAMANLIS' LETTER 1 DCM SAW MFA NATO OFFICE CHIEF DA RIN FOR GENERAL REVIEW OF
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, MARR, GR, IT, CY, NATO, (DA RIN), (KARAMANLIS)
To: STATE NATO BRUSSELS
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005